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# SIouxLAND HERITAGE FOUNDATION

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## **\$2 million state grant for new Sioux City museum awarded**

The Siouxland Heritage Foundation received word this afternoon that the Vision Iowa Board has awarded a \$2 million dollar grant today for the Sioux City Public Museum's new site in downtown Sioux City. The board voted unanimously to approve funding through the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant program for the \$13.8 million project.

"This grant by the Vision Iowa Board is a very important step toward the completion of the capital campaign to make our new museum a reality. We thank them for this critical support for this outstanding project which has received wide support in the community," said Mike Bennett, capital campaign chairman. "The campaign is now entering the 'home stretch' and we invite everyone in the community to consider a pledge to take it across the finish line."

The grant award is the culmination of months of effort by city leaders and community volunteers. The Vision Iowa application was submitted by the Siouxland Heritage Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) created to oversee design, construction and fundraising of the new Sioux City Public Museum.

The \$2 million in state funding is contingent upon the Siouxland Heritage Foundation raising an additional \$1.1 million within the next 180 days. Bennett said the award should encourage other donors to join the nearly 300 supporters of the "Our New Museum" capital campaign.

The final phase of the capital campaign will include appeals to the general public for support. An open house and tours of the new site will be offered on June 20 and 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Museum's website, [www.siouxcitymuseum.org](http://www.siouxcitymuseum.org), includes the latest capital campaign news as well as giving information and a pledge card.

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The development of a new museum facility represents an extensive public/private partnership. The City of Sioux City purchased the former department store building for use as a new museum, and has appropriated \$1.5 million for the project. The new museum will occupy the entire first floor of the building — approximately 55,000 square feet of floor space, with about 10,000 square feet of two-story space as an atrium in the southwest corner of the building. The SHF board has hired the architectural firm of Neumann Monson Victor of Sioux City as the principal designers. The local company partnered in their application with Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects of Lincoln, Nebraska, which has extensive museum design experience.

Today's decision means the bidding process for renovation of the former JC Penney building at 607 Fourth Street will begin in the coming weeks. Early architectural renderings call for a dramatic façade with a glass exterior through which artifacts and activities can be seen from outside.

The location, at 4th and Nebraska Streets, places the museum at the heart of Sioux City's recently designated downtown cultural and entertainment district, in proximity to the Sioux City Art Center, the Orpheum Theater, other cultural and entertainment venues, and the central business district. The Foundation's board envisions the new Public Museum as a regional destination, adding to the cultural attractions in the central business district.

In addition, the new facility will allow more space for the display and storage of the Sioux City Public Museum collections. Currently, the Sioux City Public Museum is only able to showcase 15 percent of its collection which includes more than 250,000 photographs and 50,000 objects. The new museum will contain multipurpose classrooms, offices, a conference room, artifact and exhibition preparation rooms, food prep space, a theater, large temporary exhibit spaces, archival storage, and a gift shop.

The Sioux City Public Museum traces its roots back to late 1800s, later becoming a division of the City of Sioux City in 1938. The Museum opened in the Peirce Mansion in 1961.

Foundation members remain optimistic the new site will open by August 2010. Members of the Siouxland Heritage Foundation Board of Directors are Milt Avery, Mike Bennett, Dave Bernstein, Dennis Bullock, Rosie Chicoine, Debi Durham, Adam Feiges, Dave Ferris, Jason Geary, Irving Jensen, Jr., Ray Krigsten, Ed Lord, Karen Van De Steeg, and Joan Waitt.

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